

SPRING 2014

vanderbiltnurse



Serving the Never-Served

See how VUSN's inner-city clinic
provides meaningful care to
those with great needs



PHOTO BY VANDERBILT CREATIVE SERVICES

LISA BALDWIN, AMY BONAU, HANNAH PROCTOR AND MAGGI HUME ARE JUST FOUR OF THE STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT FROM THE LETTIE PATE WHITEHEAD FOUNDATION.

CHANGING LIVES

Scholarships changed the lives of these four students, and made their dreams of becoming nurse practitioners possible. One day, they'll return the favor by changing the lives of their patients with their skilled care and compassion.

For more information on supporting scholarships at the School of Nursing, contact Sydney Haffkine at (615) 322-8851 or sydney.haffkine@vanderbilt.edu.



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We value excellence and innovation in preserving and advancing the art and science of nursing in the scholarly domains of education, research, practice and informatics. These values are pursued through the integration of information technology and faculty-student interactions and transactions, while embracing cultural and academic diversity.



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Angela Hudgens (pictured here and on cover), is a patient who receives health care from the Clinic at Mercury Courts—a partnership that provides physical, social and spiritual support to those in need.

make connections@vusn

We want to reach out to you. Pick one or all of the ways below to stay in touch with your classmates, faculty and School:

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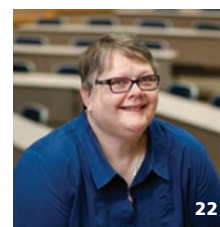
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JOHN RUSSELL



Dear Alumni, Colleagues and Supporters,

The academic calendar is a continuous cycle of open houses, new student orientations, faculty summits, pinning ceremonies and graduation. In between those events, the School is literally bubbling with activity. Hundreds of students are coming on campus for block learning sessions each semester. On campus, students are holding impromptu study groups in every possible open space in Godchaux and Frist Halls. Guest speakers are presenting special sessions. Students and faculty are speed-walking to classes, and students are participating in various clinical placements.

While VUSN operates like a well-oiled machine, we need to pause and take a long, hard look at our School to determine strategic direction.

Are there ways we can enhance our academic programs? Are we meeting the needs of the health care delivery system? Are we making a difference in our community? Are there things we are not doing that we should be doing?

We want to know the answers to those questions, therefore we have launched a strategic planning process this year. We will follow specific guidelines to fact-find and gather information, and work as a faculty, staff and student body to develop a methodical and strategic approach that will take us through the next five years. We are certain that this process will only make the school

stronger and more focused going forward. We will report back to you once we have the complete information to share, and if you have thoughts, please don't hesitate to contact me.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Nurse* magazine. True to our mission of practice, teaching, research and informatics, we have something in this issue for everyone to enjoy. We delve deeper into The Clinic at Mercury Courts, designed to bring quality health care to hard-to-reach underserved, transient individuals in Middle Tennessee.

We showcase three of our preceptors, just a few of the hundreds who make it possible to give our students meaningful clinical experiences. And, we highlight the Associate Degree in the Science of Nursing (ASN) to MSN program, so you can better understand the program's foundation and teaching philosophy.

We have so much news to share and hope you enjoy staying connected in this way.

Linda Norman, DSN, RN, FAAN
 Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing
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JOHN RUSSELL

Patient Bobby Harris pets Swoosh at the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. Swoosh and his owner/volunteer Michelle Thompson are part of a study examining the benefits of pet therapy for young cancer patients.

Study Looks at the Role of Therapy Dogs

It's not uncommon for a child with newly diagnosed cancer to become depressed, lonely and have strained family relationships, but a new Vanderbilt study is investigating whether therapy dogs could have a positive effect on children undergoing chemotherapy.

This first-of-its-kind grant, coordinated by the American Humane Association and funded by animal health company, Zoetis, was recently awarded to Vanderbilt University School of Nursing's Mary Jo Gilmer, PhD, MBA, RN.

"Many studies have anecdotally documented the benefits of animal-assisted therapy. We all want to think that pet therapy helps, but we need the evidence to back that up, to see if it is a sound treatment option for patients and their families," said Gilmer.

Specifically, Principal Investigator Gilmer and Co-Investigators Terrah Foster Akard, from VUSN, and Deb Friedman, MD, director of Hematology and Oncology at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, want to determine if animal-assisted therapy helps reduce anxiety and enhance health-related quality of life in children with newly diagnosed cancer as well as their parents or guardians. The researchers will evaluate the impact of pet therapy on anxiety and health-related quality of life of these children, as well as levels of distress in the therapy dogs themselves.

(continued)

UCLA's Lyder Helps Celebrate MLK Day

In honor of Rev. Martin Luther King's dedication to service, Vanderbilt University Medical Center honored King's legacy through student community service, a lecture by UCLA Dean Courtney Lyder, and presentation of the annual Martin Luther King award.

Lyder, ND, ScD, noted researcher, policymaker, educator and pioneer, captivated faculty, students and staff by honoring nursing icons who shaped his career and the profession of nursing, as part of Rev. Martin Luther King Day activities at Vanderbilt.

"Reflecting the meaning of this day, and the man Martin Luther King, the key is that he always had a dream," said Lyder. "At every stage of your career, you have to reflect. You have to dream a re-dream."

Lyder shared his personal mentors as examples of service to others and making a lasting impact. They include: Bev Malone, president of the National League of Nursing, the first American nurse named as the general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing; Mary Harper, PhD, whose groundbreaking work resulted in the Institutional Review Board (IRB); and Luther Christman, former VUSN dean, the first male dean of a school of Nursing. He also credited Angela McBride, Indiana University professor emerita.

(continued from page 3)

“What research does tell us so far is that the physical effects of dealing with cancer may greatly improve over time, but often the psychosocial effects linger,” said Gilmer. “Animal-assisted therapy may have the potential to assist families in coping with the child’s cancer experience.”

This study will take place in five sites across the country. Training for the dogs and for the animal handlers started in December. There will be up to 20 children with acute lymphocytic leukemia and lymphoblastic lymphoma participating. Typically, treatment involves one month of chemotherapy administered in the hospital, followed by weekly chemotherapy visits in the clinic setting. The therapy dogs will be at each visit.

Gilmer, a palliative care expert, has seen how animals can have an impact on patients. A few years ago, a teenage patient of hers she calls “Amy” to protect her identity, was

declining after her body rejected a second kidney transplant. Amy wanted her black, toy-sized dog by her side. Amy’s parents couldn’t make the two-and-a-half-hour drive back home without fearing they would miss crucial moments, but Gilmer had an idea.

“While it wasn’t the same as her own dog, my grown son had dog just like Amy’s. So I brought his dog, Carli, to the hospital,” said Gilmer. “Amy was very agitated and restless at that time, but Carli curled up right next to Amy. The tension from Amy’s face evaporated and she seemed more comfortable. Two hours later, Amy died with Carli still by her side. It was that reality—seeing what a difference an animal can make, that has made me want to research this area.”

Gilmer hopes to have preliminary results this summer to help shine more light on the bond shared between people and animals.

Faculty Book Signing

The School Life Committee recently hosted a book signing event with VUSN faculty-authors as a way to showcase faculty scholarship. Nearly 100 students came by to have their books or bookplates signed by one or all of the VUSN faculty who authored books, edited books or contributed chapters to textbooks. Authors included: Michelle Collins, PhD, CNM; Mary Jo Gilmer, PhD, MBA, RN; Sharon Holley, DNP, CNM; Frances Likis, Dr PH, CNM (pictured below); Cathy Maxwell, PhD, RN; Tonia Moore-Davis, CNM, MSN, (pictured), Julia Phillippi, PhD, CNM, and Mavis Schorn, PhD, CNM.



DANIEL DUBOIS

NLGH Conference is a Big Success

More than 220 people from 14 countries and 30 states came to Nashville in February for the Nursing Leadership in Global Health (NLGH) Conference. Her Royal Highness Princess Muna al-Hussein of Jordan kicked off the event where presenters and attendees addressed the overall goal of improving patient care by elevating the voice of nursing, delved deep into four specific tracks of discussion: leadership and management, policy, advocacy and field engagement.

“Although nurses deliver 90 percent of all health care services world-

wide, they remain largely invisible at decision-making tables in national capitals and international agencies. Their absence constitutes a global health crisis,” said Sheila Davis, from the global health organization Partners in Health.

More than 30 speakers brought a wealth of real-world experience to the issues at hand, along with research posters exhibited throughout the conference. Event coordinator Carol Etherington, MSN (VU ‘75), RN, associate professor of Nursing, said, “The real work happens after the conference, as

attendees and presenters share their insights and strive to elevate nursing influence in their home environments. We wanted NLGH to spark new channels of networking in order to support nurses’ efforts to become strong patient advocates, often in very challenging contexts.”

The conference was presented by Vanderbilt University Medical Center’s Department of Nursing Education and Professional Development, the Vanderbilt Institute of Global Health and the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.



JOHN RUSSELL



contact

For more information and summaries of the content discussed, visit nlgh2014.org.

Weiner Elected to IOM

VUSN's Betsy Weiner, PhD, RN, senior associate dean for Informatics, was elected to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) last fall. With more than 1,900 members, the IOM is the health arm of the National Academies, serving as an adviser to the nation to improve health and promote health-related research.

Weiner, Centennial Independence Foundation Professor of Nursing and professor of Biomedical Informatics, is considered a pioneer in multimedia development, particularly in the area of distance learning programs in nursing, and the informatics tools that tie together research, practice and academics. Weiner is a fellow of both the American Medical Informatics Association and the American Academy of Nursing. She joined the Vanderbilt faculty in 2000 after 21 years at the University of Cincinnati.

In 2008, Weiner received the AMIA's Virginia K. Saba Informatics Award in recognition of her "substantial" contributions to the field of nursing informatics, and in 2011 she was appointed to the Bipartisan Policy Center's Task Force on Delivery System Reform and Health Information Technology in Washington, D.C.

Weiner received her B.S. degree in Nursing and her Ph.D. in Higher Education, Social & Philosophical Studies from the University of Kentucky, and an M.S. degree in Nursing from the University of Cincinnati.

Early in her career, she received one of the first IBM grants for innovative education to develop an informatics-based labor and delivery simulation that was used in nursing schools throughout the country. Her later online education in emergency preparedness continues to be used by nurses worldwide, and led to her consulting internationally for the World Health Organization.

In addition to Weiner, Mark Frisse, MD, MS, MBA, Accenture Professor and director of Regional Informatics, was also elected to the IOM. Among his many accolades, Frisse led development of a government-sponsored health information exchange in the greater Memphis area and is a principal contributor of the Vanderbilt MyHealthTeam initiative, which won a three-year, \$18.8 million Health Care Innovation Award from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Love Takes Helm of Psychiatric Mental Health Program

Rene Love has been named program director for the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN). She succeeds Susie Adams, who was recently named Nursing Faculty Scholar for Community Engaged Behavioral Health at VUSN.

Love has taught at VUSN for 15 years, including courses in the MSN and DNP programs. She has secured grants focused on mental health in public schools, such as developing state guidelines for mental health for the Tennessee State Board of Education. She is frequently an invited speaker for national conferences on topics including how to prepare school systems for post-crisis responses and advocating for change in the psychiatric nursing workforce.

In 2012, she was awarded the Jeanette Chamberlain award for service from the International Society of Psychiatric Nursing. She is an active member of Sigma Theta Tau International and played an important role in last year's 60th anniversary of the Iota Chapter. She was recently accepted into the National Academies of Practice.

Love earned her BSN from Valdosta State, and her MSN, DNP and Family Psych Mental Health post master's certificate from VUSN. She is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Arizona.



JOHN RUSSELL

Adams Named School's First Faculty Scholar

Susie Adams, PhD, RN, has been named to the newly created position of Nursing Faculty Scholar for Community Engaged Behavioral Health at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing. The Faculty Scholar position will partner with existing and/or new agencies affiliated with VUSN to evaluate evidence-based health practices, analyze program outcomes and disseminate findings.

"Susie is the ideal person to lead scholarly contributions in this new way. She is viewed as a consummate collaborator and partner within the local, regional and national behavioral health community, and she is respected for her own work, particularly in the health and well-being of women with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders," said Linda Norman, DSN, RN, Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing, and Dean of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

Adams has served as program director for the school's Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program for almost two decades, growing the program in meaningful ways and making it one of the most popular specialty tracks at the school. Her research has made a profound impact in organizations such as The Next Door, an agency that serves women with substance abuse problems re-entering the community from incarceration. Since 1997, she has served on the board of the Mental Health Cooperative, a multi-site network which provides a continuum of services for those with serious mental illness. She is also president-elect of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association.



VUMC Lands Moore Foundation Grant

Vanderbilt University's Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies was awarded \$2.2 million from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to address nursing workforce issues that may impede future health care.

Certain regions in the U.S., particularly rural areas, continue to report a shortage of nurses, especially in specialties such as operating room and labor and delivery. And with health care reform, the expected increased demand for health care services, including those provided primarily by nurses, is likely to create a significant strain on the nursing workforce.

Further, there are new models of care delivery and a greater emphasis on prevention that will require comprehensive care, greater care coordination and adherence to protocols and improved management of chronic disease—roles that are inherently aligned with the nursing model of care. Unfortunately, experiential data to better understand the impact of these issues is fragmented and not very robust.

"The importance of registered nurses is expected to increase in the coming decades to address significant challenges within our health care system, but empirical workforce research is necessary to help us understand how to better address the issues," said Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, Valere Potter Professor at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing and director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies at Vanderbilt University.

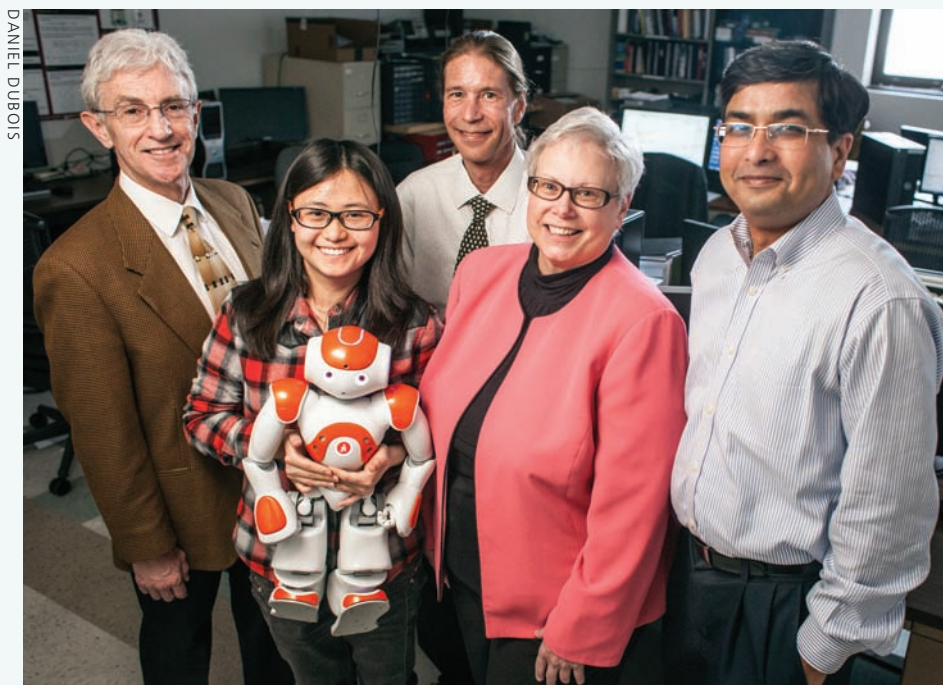
School Reaches Out to Male Students

The VUSN Admissions Office reports male recruitment is on the upswing. During the past four years, the percentage of male students has consistently risen. In the current academic year, 11.3 percent of the students are male. Perhaps one reason for this is the growth of the School's thriving American Assembly for Men in Nursing: Middle Tennessee Chapter at Vanderbilt.

Each month the group meets to discuss issues impacting male nursing students and men currently in the nursing workforce. Led by Tom Christenbery, PhD, MSN, the group provides an opportunity for camaraderie and networking, and has gained a positive reputation outside Vanderbilt as well, since two men from local hospital systems not affiliated with Vanderbilt recently joined the group.

Christenbery, along with Joseph Baily, RN, a second-year MSN student, Alvin Jeffery, MSN, RN/APN, first-year PhD student, and Robb Nash, MSN, RN/APN, second-year PhD student, participated in a 90-minute panel discussion for the Graduate Nursing Admission Professionals Program, held at VUSN in April. The VUSN group also hopes to eventually provide more outreach in the community via men's health screenings at area events.

Spotlight on Nursing Research//Socially Assistive Robots and Senior Care



DANIEL DUBOIS

The project team (L to R): Paul Newhouse, Jing Fan, Greg Hunt, Lorraine Mion and Nilanjan Sarkar.

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing's Lorraine Mion believes nursing resources are going to be stretched to their limits with a growing senior population. To help shore up these anticipated gaps, she thinks robots can play a role in complementing or supplementing some senior care needs. Collaborating with some of the best minds from the realms of engineering and geropsychology, an initial study is being launched to see how robots might successfully engage seniors with cognitive issues and dementia.

While there is ongoing work in this field, the Vanderbilt team is the first that has a robot that can dynamically adapt its own behavior based on what people are feeling. It's known as a closed-loop system, much like the way a driver's behavior must adapt to other drivers braking or changing lanes on the road.

It all started with work by Vanderbilt Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Computer Engineering Nilanjan Sarkar, PhD, when he outfitted computer/robot

users with biosensors and analyzed variations in blood pressure and skin response to evaluate emotions. A personal experience led him to apply his work to young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Sarkar, Jing Fan and Paul Newhouse, MD, director of the Vanderbilt Center for Cognitive Medicine, are now working with Mion and Greg Hunt, VUSN research coordinator, to see how the man-machine interface might make a difference to seniors.

"Professor Sarkar's work made me think, 'how can we possibly supplement nursing workforce personnel in the long-term setting and from a cognitive and behavioral point of view?'" Mion said. "So think about apathy, for instance. There is a high correlation between apathy and poor outcomes among older adults. Perhaps robots could engage older adults, just like the children with ASD who responded to the robots."

There are many types of robots in use today, including assistive devices for disabilities, such as smart wheelchairs or

prosthetic limbs; for tasks such as lifting, carrying and doing laundry; and for meal-time, as in feeding systems or voice-controlled meal preparation.

This team is interested in how socially assistive robots, interactive machines that can aid with intellectual, social or emotional support, can help senior care. They can provide companionship, entertainment, and even facilitate intellectual stimulation.

Enter: Nao, an off-the-shelf robot whose internal engineering has been modified by the Vanderbilt engineers to integrate with various cameras and sensors and work like one system. Nao will approach wheelchair-bound test subjects, say its name and engage the older adult in a variety of activities, such as mild exercises (e.g. raising its arms), or singing a song. If the older adult mimics the robot, Nao will follow up with a more challenging activity. If the older adult does not respond, Nao will speak words of encouragement and try to engage further. All the while, sensors will measure the older adult's various body responses like heart rate and brain waves.

"If you had your own personal trainer, he or she would try to make the patient engaged, but also know when to back down if the patient is getting stressed out," said Sarkar. "We want Nao to have the same capacity, and see if this interactivity is making the seniors feel better psychologically and physiologically."

As with most research, Mion points out there are many questions: What will seniors think? Will they think the robot is a toy? If so, is that a good thing? What will nursing personnel think? Will they see the robot as helpful, or an annoyance that gets in their way?

The initial alpha study with healthy older adults will start to answer these questions, followed by beta testing this summer. There is no question that this is foundational research with many potential applications. "The key is to find the most useful fit," Mion said.

— KATHY RIVERS



ANGELA HUDGENS



SERVING THE NEVER-SERVED

When the Clinic at Mercury Courts opened in the summer of 2012, the staff expected to be inundated with patient visits.

Designed to provide medical care for people and families transitioning from homelessness and other poverty situations, the clinic on Murfreesboro Road is located within a 5-mile radius of 12 properties serving low income and transitional housing residents, including the gated Mercury Courts near downtown Nashville.

But the clinic stood mostly idle for days on end.

“We came in here thinking that just because we opened up shop that people would be lining up for services,” said Christian Ketel, MSN, RN-BC, manager of the Clinic at Mercury Courts. “What we didn’t realize was that we had a lot of work to do to create relationships with those in the community who had become accustomed to health care coming and going. It was not abnormal for a health care practice to open and within months be gone.

“Our biggest challenge was setting into motion that we were not going anywhere,” he said. “We had to develop trust with the members of the community. It didn’t happen overnight, but once word spread, the patients came.”

It’s been nearly two years since the clinic opened and patient volume continues to grow. There are 900 patients who have chosen the clinic as their medical home. Providers see up to 150 patients a month.

It’s a far cry from the first quiet weeks at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing-run primary care clinic.

BY JESSICA PASLEY

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL DUBOIS



On a cold, overcast day in January,

the four-room clinic is bustling with regular patients, walk-ins and some passersby popping in for a visit.

It doesn't take long for the 1,200-square-foot space to feel full. It is exactly what Bonnie Pilon, DSN, RN, senior associate dean for Clinical and Community Partnerships at VUSN, envisioned.

"We see everything that a primary care office would see from flu and colds to warts and heart disease," she said. "We are providing an essential service to this community and we can see that they are benefiting from our practice."

The services provided at the Clinic at Mercury Courts help get patients diagnosed and treated quickly and keep them from using area emergency rooms for basic medical care. The clinic, which offers labs and medications, uses the local safety net referral network for uninsured patients with more complex health care needs, said Pilon.

Mercury Courts opened in 1992 in

the landmark Mercury Motel, which was refurbished to make way for 160 apartments for formerly homeless or low-income individuals. The clinic, which previously housed the security office, sits at the front of the property outside the gated community. It is accessible to anyone in need of health care.

"This patient population is used to either not seeking care at all or going to the ER when they are sick," Pilon said. "We have done a good job of providing access to care to a group that didn't have it previously."

"We are meeting the needs of not only an 'underserved' community, but also what we sometimes refer to as the 'never-served.' For such a small clinic, we are doing a lot."

The clinic utilizes a unique model of care that brings together interprofessional, licensed providers in a nurse-led primary care site to work alongside students with multi-professional backgrounds including

nursing, pharmacy, social work and medicine to provide preventive and chronic disease management.

The patient population and the inter-professional team focus is what attracted family nurse practitioner nursing student Hanna Chapman to work at the clinic during her first year at VUSN.

Although anxious about the slow start when the clinic opened, Chapman credits her experience at Mercury Courts for further solidifying her decision to work with the medically underserved.

"Working at the clinic, I have been challenged by the extensive barriers to care, said Chapman. "These patients' medical conditions are complicated by other issues that must be addressed, including transportation, diet, finances, medications and housing."

"I have learned the importance of building relationships with patients and developing trust. A patient has to know

1 Angela Hudgens, aka the Momma of Mercury, believes she and Family Nurse Practitioner Aaron Scott are a team when it comes to her health care. She started seeing Scott for specific health situations, then made him her primary provider and The Clinic at Mercury Courts her health care home.

2 Nursing student Hannah Chapman examines one of the young members of the Alam family, an example of the full range of services the clinic provides.

3 The Clinic at Mercury Courts' Christian Ketel has used friendship as a way to connect with Jason Lester and improve his health.

4 Like all of the Mercury Courts residents, Eugene Dotson and his grandson, Zalowen Smith, receive free primary health care at the clinic.



that you are there because you truly care and want to help them achieve a better quality of life,” said Chapman. “Sometimes, it’s not about the stethoscope. It goes way beyond that.”

Half of the patients utilizing the clinic are residents of an Urban Housing Solutions development, a nonprofit organization committed to providing affordable housing for the homeless, mentally ill and physically disabled, as well as people in recovery, newly released from prison and others in need of an affordable place to live.

Building Trust

Angela Hudgens, a resident of Mercury Courts for more than two years, is affectionately called the Momma of Mercury. Unofficially she serves as the eyes and ears of the complex. Although it took a little getting used to, she said, people are happy the clinic is becoming a fixture in the community.

“When they first came here, we were all shocked. The clinic is in the same office where we got carded to get into the gated community,” recalls Hudgens. “But after the shock wore off and we saw that they were staying and wanting to help us, we slowly warmed up to the idea.

“There are so many people who need this ... residents and homeless around here wouldn’t get the help they really need if the clinic wasn’t here. The clinic offers more than medical care. They go above and beyond the call of duty.

“But what really means the most—we are treated like we are supposed to be treated—like we are human beings. That goes a long way, it really does.”

Hudgens boasts that her primary care provider, Aaron Scott, likes to spoil his patients.

“I don’t spoil any of my patients. I just treat them like I would want to be treated and we are consistent no matter who walks in our clinic doors,” said Scott, FNP-C, MSN, RN, lead nurse practitioner at the clinic.

“We take the time to listen and talk to our patients. We teach our patients how best to take care of themselves. We make sure they have the resources they need to make that happen. We don’t dismiss them. We don’t judge,” said Scott.

Hudgens knows this first-hand. After 17 years as a medical assistant, she was plagued by seizures. She could no longer work and had to apply for disability. Displaced from her apartment and after living at her sister’s home, she became a Mercury Courts resident.

At 46, Hudgens has a series of health complications including arthritis, asthma, intermittent high cholesterol and high blood pressure, but she feels that her health concerns are under control these days.

“The clinic has been a godsend to me and a lot of people,” said Hudgens. “My health is a lot better and if there’s something wrong, I can go to the clinic. I have made Aaron my primary care provider, so

FUNDING

The clinic is funded by a variety of sources, the largest being a collaborative project grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Division of Nursing to investigate interprofessional health care team development and outcomes. The second major funding source comes from VUSN to pay for operational costs not covered by the HRSA grant.

To assist in covering the costs of services to uninsured patients, the clinic belongs to a consortium of safety net providers that offer free or low-cost health care.

The clinic also receives donations from private sources including the Memorial Foundation, which helped purchase diagnostic testing equipment and covers a large percentage of indigent lab fees and the Boulevard Bolt, a Nashville-area 5K held on Thanksgiving Day each year.



What door leads to chances and opportunity? Our clinic is a door of hope. And we are an open door.”

he’s where I go. He knows me and understands my issues like no one else.”

When she was recently having some dizzy spells, Scott and Hudgens determined that her three medications were causing her typically high blood pressure to drop unexpectedly. Hudgens also lost a few pounds which may have impacted her dosage.

“It was mind boggling to me, but we figured it out, and Aaron took me off some of my meds. Now I feel much better,” said Hudgens.

Teaching

“It’s interesting,” Scott noted. “As we are teaching our students about how to provide good, quality health care, we are also teaching our patients. It all goes hand in hand.”

Although created to provide access to care to an often forgotten population, the clinic also exists to serve as an important teaching health center and practice site for VUSN faculty.

Ketel encourages all clinical faculty members to volunteer at the clinic.

“We would love to have more faculty involvement,” said Ketel. “Now that we are more established and we continue to attract more patients, we could use more assistance.

“There are so many opportunities for our faculty to participate in caring for patients, community engagement and supporting students as they experience the clinical setting.

“Our patient care model is truly cutting edge in terms of the way we deliver health care. It’s an interprofessional, team-based approach engaging the patient as a team member, and the team itself is connected to the local community. And, we are looking at how to expand it to other sites. Mercury has really reignited my passion for nursing and opened my eyes to the

potential nursing can have locally as well as the influence it can have on a larger scale.”

The Clinic at Mercury Courts is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Mondays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and closed on weekends. Since opening its doors, providers have become very aware of the constraints of a three-exam room clinic.

Currently a mobile care program for off-site holistic care is in the works. The idea is to provide complete wraparound services—physical, spiritual and social support—to those who are unable to get to the clinic, who are often the most vulnerable in the community.

The clinic serves 30 Urban Housing Solutions properties as well as transitional housing residents, homeless and local businesses. Despite reaching 3,000 patient visits since August 2013, it has not reached capacity.

As spring and summer approach, health fairs and neighborhood events will provide occasions for the clinic staff to

identify potential patients, said Ketel. And since the area is populated with transitional groups, there are always opportunities to offer health care to those in need.

Fulfilling Needs

Carole Bartoo, MSN, RN, AGNP-BC, nurse practitioner/transition advocate for the Vanderbilt Center for Quality Aging, spent one year volunteering at the clinic after obtaining her master’s degree from the School of Nursing.

She said the clinic provides a service that does not exist anywhere else, making it “beyond essential.”

“Everyone deserves basic health care services,” said Bartoo. “If I learned anything while I was there, it was just how huge the crack is that people fall into in Tennessee. I saw patients who had no family support, no resources, who were suffering from chronic illnesses and had not seen a health care provider in a long, long, long time.

“There is such a distrust of the medical community as a whole among this population, which is why this clinic is vital. It operates on the notion that everyone who walks through that door is treated the same, period,” Bartoo said.

AFFORDABLE MEDICATIONS

Dispensary of Hope, a nationwide distributor that provides unused or surplus medications to health care providers and clinics to disperse to people with no pharmacy coverage, is a key component to the Clinic at Mercury Courts’ ability to provide access to affordable medications.

The clinic dispenses about \$4,000 worth of medications monthly. It does not have a pharmacy but is able to stock a dispensing closet of medications for some of the more prevalent disease states like hypertension, high cholesterol and asthma. It still has a difficult time getting diabetes and COPD medications because of the high demand within the health care field, said Scott.

“It is important to note that we do not have any narcotics on site,” added Ketel. “People know that we do not keep any narcotics so they do not expect to get them. In an area where drug-seeking behavior is common, it is not an issue here.

“We don’t prescribe any scheduled drugs here either and drug seekers know that, so we don’t have to deal with any disruptive behavior related to abuse and addiction in the clinic.”



■ Jason Lester, 28, has lived in his Mercury Courts residence for five years, after leaving his family home in nearby Williamson County. Lester has battled many health concerns, chiefly severe depression, and credits Clinic Manager Christian Ketel for helping him change his life around.

“There is no preconceived judgment about how or why a person is in the situation they are in. The focus is addressing the health concern at hand. It should be that way everywhere, but sadly it isn’t.”

Traci Patton, the health services coordinator for residents of Urban Housing Solutions, knows this all too well.

With 20 years of experience working with the low-income and homeless communities, she welcomed the commitment expressed by the School of Nursing to establish a clinic in the Murfreesboro Road area.

“Health care is a barrier for people in poverty,” said Patton. “And health care also requires a level of trust that is tough for a community that has a lack of trust for all systems.”

“Once the clinic established that it was indeed a part of the community is when

people stopped seeing it as just another building and as a place that could help them,” she said. “The clinic is a solid medical home for so many and is a point of contact where medical needs are addressed.”

Patton said she has heard from local business owners along Murfreesboro Road that the clinic has not only impacted those seeking quality medical care, but has also been a positive improvement for the area.

Patton saw the clinic as an opportunity to open the door for better things in the community.

“If you go up and down Murfreesboro Road, what do you see?” asked Patton. “Lots of doors leading to destruction and bad choices.”

“What door leads to chances and opportunity? Our clinic is a door of hope. And we are an open door.”

“That is what I really like. The blinds on the window are never closed. When you come in someone always says hello. Sometimes all you need is for someone to show that they care and to believe in you.”

**All patients in this story provided consent to share their health information.*

KEY RESULTS

Although long-term clinical outcomes data is not yet available, here are a few highlights:

- In one year, clinicians have seen progress in hypertension control rates with a nearly 20 percent improvement in patient levels.
- Smoking cessation screening is at 100 percent, which prompted the implementation of an aggressive smoking cessation program.
- Social work services screenings are at 100 percent. Forty percent of patients have taken advantage of these services.
- Behavioral medicine has an 80 percent rate of adherence with regular follow-up and counseling.

Spreading Their Wings

Preceptors Nurture Students' Clinical Experience

In the dictionary, a preceptor is “an instructor; teacher; tutor.” At Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, a preceptor is one of the most important roles in the evolution of a nursing student.

Preceptors are one-on-one mentors responsible for training students during clinical placements. They help students take what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to real patients in real health care settings.

“To simplify it, it’s an internship. Preceptors can be doctors or nurse practitioners, and they take the student into their practice to train in their area of specialization, from family practice to nurse midwifery,” said LeeAnn Ruderer, director of Clinical Placement at VUSN.

“They’re the lifeblood of our school and an integral part of every program.”

BY LESLIE HILL

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL AUSTIN





linical requirements for students range from 680 hours to 1,000 hours,

depending on their specialty. The Clinical Placement Department at VUSN has a staff of five who oversee the placements of all students. They seek out preceptors, arrange placements, negotiate contractual agreements and manage compliance with state boards of nursing and education.

This spring semester, the department has positioned nearly 200 students in Tennessee and 158 students in 39 other states. Sites include hospitals and private practices, work-site-based clinics, rural clinics, federally-qualified health care centers and nonprofits.

“The best learning experiences are out in the community, where you see, hear and experience it all,” said Crickett Harmer, Senior Clinical Placement Program Coordinator.

As VUSN’s distance learning expands, more students are seeking good clinical experiences. But without any connections to the local health care scene, that can be a daunting process. The department makes every effort to customize the student experience by close collaboration with the student, faculty, alumni and potential preceptors.

The VUSN Alumni Board has made it a goal to increase their role to find more preceptors around the country.

“With the increasing number of students who are doing their rotations outside of Tennessee, it was the desire of the Alumni Board to help find qualified supervising advanced practice nurses. Therefore the committee is going to work this next year to help expand the number of preceptors as well as the scope of specialties,” said board president Doug Arrington.

Ruderer said finding a preceptor is often time-consuming and stressful for distance students.

“In the clinic, we keep them healthy. Nurses are often good at the sick, but it’s how to keep patients from being sick or from getting sicker that has to be learned.” – DAVID MCCLAIN



“It can be very hard to find a preceptor in their area who is also in their specialty. It would be wonderful to connect more with our alumni for leads on possible placements. Even if they’re not, say, a nurse midwife, they may know an OB-GYN practice in town that would be an excellent training opportunity for a women’s health student or a family practice for another specialty. Tips like that are so helpful.”

Even locally, the competition for clinical placements is stiff.

“We often contact some sites and they are already booked for a year or two. Our local preceptors will tell us they are bombarded with calls from students at other schools. We see this as wonderful that the nursing field is growing, but challenging for securing the best training experiences,” Harmer said.

The biggest need is for primary care preceptors because so many specialties require that experience. Other high priorities are pediatrics and OB-GYN.

Arrington said he can still remember the impact of his clinical rotations and hopes other alumni will volunteer as preceptors.

“Working with students is a great experience. I always learn way more than I feel that I provide for the student. By serving as a role model for students it allows them to see the true capacities that advanced practice nurses can fulfill,” he said.

Harmer echoed that two things—the opportunity to learn the latest practices and theories from students and a “pay it forward” mentality—drive preceptors to volunteer.

“Many of our preceptors say how important their clinical experiences were and how they want to give back.”

Preceptors can receive continuing education credits for teaching students.

“Our preceptors say they love to have students because it helps them learn as well,” Ruderer said. “They find joy in teaching because they can be a mentor to the student and help foster and nurture their love of health care.”

Here are the stories of just three of the hundreds of preceptors who go beyond the definition.

David McClain has precepted more than 30 VUSN students over the past 15 years at the Bell Clinic in rural Elkton, Ky. Twenty miles from the nearest hospital, the clinic sees 25-50 patients a day with complaints that run the health care gamut.

McClain actually did a rotation at the clinic while he was in school and joined the staff after his 1995 graduation from the Family Nurse Practitioner program.

“About a year after I started working, I got a call asking me to be a preceptor. I was willing to because everyone has to learn somewhere. Somebody was kind enough to help me when they didn’t have to, and I wanted to pass that on,” he said.

McClain is particularly adept at helping nurses with hospital experience transition to caring for patients in a clinic on their own.

“Hospital nurses have a certain set of eyes that don’t fit out here. In the hospital, you already know the patient has complex needs. In the clinic, we keep them healthy. Nurses are often good at the sick, but it’s



DAVID MCCLAIN

“I emphasize that we’re still a nurse and have a different philosophy of health care than physicians. I tell them that one of the great things is that many people prefer to see us. We’re not just a diagnosis—we do mind, body and spirit.” – JAMES HOPE



how to keep patients from being sick or from getting sicker that has to be learned.”

Teaching comes naturally for McClain, who has many educators in his family. He also taught a course at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center while he was a critical care nurse in the Army.

He often starts teaching by having the students do a head-to-toe assessment.

“I tell them to look at everything because they don’t know enough to filter the meaningful from the red herrings. From all that data, the problem usually falls out. Eventually, they will get the skills to start filtering the meaningful information. I want them to be able to do a history and physical in their sleep.”

McClain said he is usually standing over the student’s shoulder, but takes a more encouraging approach.

“They’re under a lot of pressure already, so I try not to teach in a berating way. If they knew everything they were supposed to, they would already be a nurse practitioner. I tell them to take it easy and enjoy the opportunity to learn.”

He often picks the students’ brains about what they are learning in class, and has them look up more information on conditions they encounter in the clinic.

“If they walk out at the end of the day feeling inadequate but enlightened, we’re doing it right.”

James Hope sees preceptors as a type of quality control for Vanderbilt’s new graduates.

“Everyone with that (VUSN) pin on their collar is a representative of Vanderbilt. They should come out of school being

strong and at the top of the market. We want to teach them well so we’re all seen as good nurse practitioners. We want to keep the value of that degree high,” he said.

A 2009 graduate of the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, Hope works as a hospitalist for Johnson City Internal Medicine, managing the night admissions and emergencies for the private physician group’s patients at Johnson City Medical Center in eastern Tennessee.

Student and preceptor usually see a patient together, and then Hope asks the student to present the patient, indicating the significant findings and major problems.

“The important thing is finding the most pressing issue. To put it bluntly, what is going to kill them first? Then we sit together and write the orders.”

He often has to stress that health is a continuum and the goal is to bring the patient back to baseline to go home.

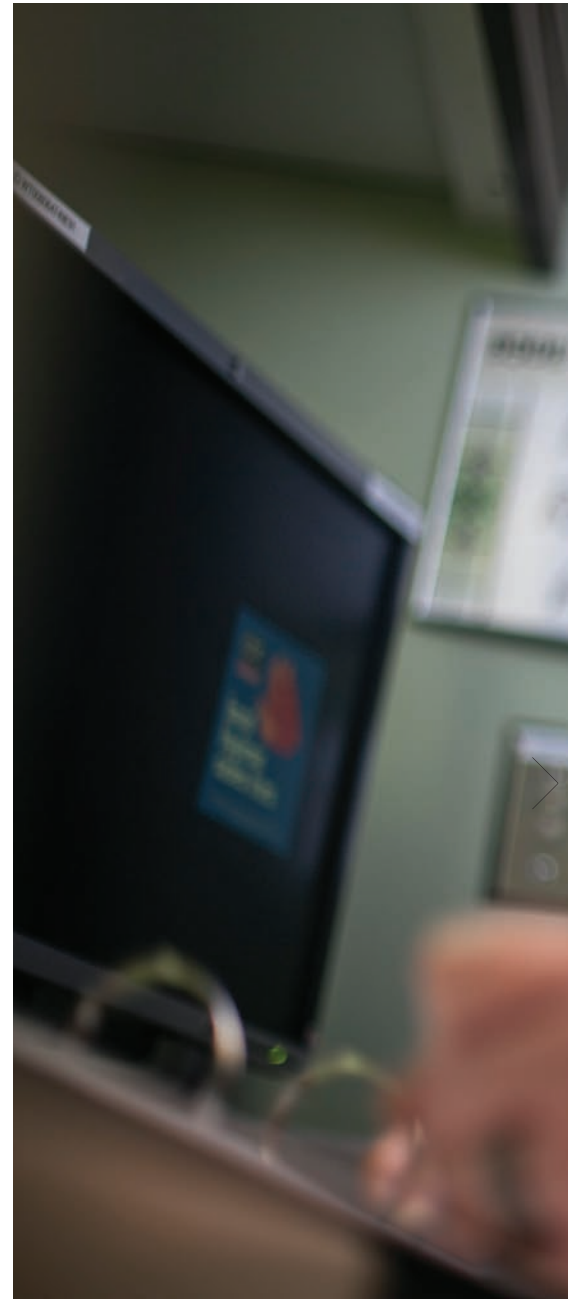
“Some people have chronic problems and will never be totally healthy. Students need to understand what that patient’s baseline level of health is so that we can set goals to get the patient out of the hospital.”

Hope also tries to drive home the unique aspects of nurse practitioners.

“I emphasize that we’re still a nurse and have a different philosophy of health care than physicians. I tell them that one of the great things is that many people prefer to see us. We’re not just a diagnosis—we do mind, body and spirit.”

One of his tricks of the trade he encourages students to copy, is carrying a list of \$4 prescriptions at Wal-Mart.

“If a patient has \$20 in their pocket and you prescribe a \$50 medication, you



haven’t done them any good,” he said.

Hope said he also benefits from precepting because he can learn about the latest research and new practices.

“As students, they’re always learning the newest info, which is a big bonus when they come in. It’s also nice just to review stuff you already know.”

He precepted a VUSN student in

JAMES HOPE



2012, who was also a staff nurse at Franklin Woods Community Hospital, where Hope covers call.

“She came from a heart failure clinic and could rattle off tons of information about that. She was very smart but didn’t have a lot of self-confidence, so we worked on building that.”

“But every student is different. I try to

figure out their strengths and weaknesses and what they want to garner from the experience.”

For Stephanie Franklin, the rewards of being a preceptor far outweigh the time constraints and extra planning required when a student is under her guidance.

“It can be challenging to give students

the time they need and also move forward with the hectic schedule of the clinic, but it is very rewarding. It keeps me on my toes. It’s been a long time since I was in school, and they come in with new and fresh ways of doing things. It forces me to keep learning,” she said.

Franklin is a 1993 graduate of VUSN and works at Eldorado Primary Care, a

family practice clinic in Southern Illinois owned by Harrisburg Medical Center. She is one of three nurse practitioners on a staff with two physicians and three counselors, and actually precepted the other two nurse practitioners when they were students.

The clinic often has students on rotations, and Franklin said the key to giving them a good experience while maintaining patient flow is scheduling.

“For the students, I choose patients who have a little extra time, who don’t have to rush back to work, and I try to schedule their follow-up when the student will be here. That way they can see how the labs come back and follow the progression of the patient. They really enjoy that continuity, and it’s more like real practice,” she said.

Franklin said patients rarely mind having a student involved in their care.

“The patients usually enjoy the students. They feel like they get such thorough exams and really good patient education.

“Someone did it for us, and it’s our turn to help future students. Nurse practitioner is a very exciting field, but it is up to us to advance the field, and part of that is being a preceptor.”-

STEPHANIE FRANKLIN

The patients will always ask where the students are and how they’re doing.”

In 2011, Franklin precepted VUSN student Natalie Finnie, now a nurse practitioner at Gallatin County Wellness Center, a primary care clinic associated with the local schools in Junction, Ill. Finnie had called on Eldorado Primary Care when she was a drug rep, and Franklin was her first choice for a preceptor.

“I thought she was a great practitioner and really respected her,” Finnie said. “I was thankful I was able to hand pick her.”

Finnie said Franklin was great at assessing her knowledge base and giving her just the right amount of direction.

“She was hands-on at first and had me watch her, then let me do things on my own. I wanted feedback immediately and would ask what I needed to sharpen my skills, and she was very good at giving guidance. She has a crazy busy schedule but never made me feel like I was in her way.”

For Franklin, the ultimate motivation to be a preceptor is giving back to other nurses.

“Someone did it for us, and it’s our turn to help future students,” she said. “Nurse practitioner is a very exciting field, but it is up to us to advance the field, and part of that is being a preceptor.”

Tips for Preceptors

1. Observe students first to gather their strengths and weaknesses, and tailor teaching and assignments to maximize learning.
2. Ask students what their goals are for a particular clinical experience and develop a set of objectives to meet those. New preceptors may want to run these by the student’s adviser.
3. Remember that you were once a student as well.
4. Ask patients first if they have some extra time to let a student do their exam.
5. Assign students patients who match what they are learning or need to work on.
6. Try to give students a variety of patient experiences—acute vs. chronic, young vs. old, difficult diagnosis vs. simple.
7. Have a continuous line of communication. Give students feedback and let them suggest ways to improve their teaching experience.
8. Have students look up something they don’t know and teach you at the next visit.
9. Remember that you don’t have to teach everything at once. A good strategy is to focus on one skill set one week and advance to something else the next.

How can I become a preceptor?

Contact the Clinical Placement Department at (615) 343-6067 or email crickett.harmer@vanderbilt.edu.



STEPHANIE FRANKLIN



an interview with
Sarah Fogel

Vanderbilt Nurse recently sat down with Sarah Fogel, PhD, RN, director of the newly re-named Associate Degree in the Science of Nursing to MSN (ASN to MSN) program. Fogel has more than 20 years' experience as a nurse and nursing educator on top of her first career as a concert violinist. She has been on faculty since 1995, and became director in 2013. She shares how she and her team are re-engineering the program to make it more valuable than ever before.

Why the name change?

This program was called the RN PreSpecialty Program, but we changed it so it could have its own more specific identity. The former name was confusing to prospective students because some without nursing experience thought this was the entry point to the master's program, when really the ASN (Associate Degree in the Science of Nursing) to MSN program is for associate degree nurses and diploma nurses in pursuit of an advanced practice nursing degree.

What is the program?

It's a two semester (fall and spring) schedule with the

summer off. This program fills the holes in between an associate degree education and a bachelor's degree in nursing. Associate programs typically do not address theory and research or community health nursing. They don't delve as deeply into pharmacology and pathophysiology as bachelor's programs in nursing do.

Are you revising it in any way?

We are building a new curriculum that emphasizes nursing science and education. We are adding a pharmacology course and weaving in more pathophysiology in our Health and Illness Across the Lifespan class. We are

going to use a competency-based format; allowing students to move to advanced pharmacology and pathophysiology in their first year, if they qualify.

Who does it appeal to?

In the last few years, the program was particularly attractive to associate degree nurses who had been practicing a long time and wanted to further their careers to advanced practice. While those folks are still a big part of our student body, recently we have seen more second degree students enter the program. Some have had careers in other areas unrelated to health care. They want to first test

the waters and learn more about nursing and confirm that pursuing advanced practice is right for them. It's exciting to see students make that transformation.

What is the culture and tone of the program like?

We've always had wonderful groups of students with great real-world and nursing experience. Now we see all that meshed with ASN nurses coming from the business world, policy positions, public health and all sorts of different backgrounds that offer different perspectives, particularly in advanced practice nursing. I have taught in this program for 19 years and love it in large

BY KATHY RIVERS
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN RUSSELL



Our program is about unleashing our students' abilities to contribute to the conversation, ask questions, think and wonder why.

part because of the really rich and fortifying discussions throughout the courses with students with such diverse nursing backgrounds.

What is the delivery method?

We teach in a block format, which means students don't have to give up their full-time jobs or the lives they have built to move to Nashville. Students come to VUSN for face-to-face blocks of four days, three times a semester. The balance of the coursework takes place asynchronously via streaming and interactive methods that students can view and participate in at home and fit into their own schedules. During block time, discussion is a big part of most of our classes. We do very little lecturing while on campus and instead use that time for seminars, dialogue and hands-on learning.

Why is this program a good investment for a current registered nurse?

It's fast, thorough and we value each student's experience. An incoming RN can attend our program and go from being a front-line nurse to becoming an advanced practice nurse in just two years—with a summer off in

between. Most people in the program continue to work full time through their first year and continue to work in some capacity while pursuing their advanced practice specialty. Out of our current class of 25 students in their first year, all but three are working full time.

Are incoming associate degree nurses intimidated?

It can be intimidating to come here as an associate degree nurse, so our faculty works very hard to work through any of those issues. We make sure these nurses realize their gifts, talents and contributions to their discipline and profession. This program is a perfect application of adult learning theory. The faculty and I think it is exciting to work with students, each with so much experience in life and in their profession, and help them reframe what they know, and then to apply that knowledge in different ways. This process seems to erase any apprehension or intimidation pretty quickly. The faculty sees it as our job to help students overcome any obstacles and unleash their potential.

As incoming program director, are you making any changes to the program?

Dr. Carolyn Bess built and sustained this program for many years. When she retired, I became interim and then permanent program director. I've gained new insight listening to students and faculty, and I've challenged faculty to question the status quo. So in addition to providing the essentials of baccalaureate nursing, we are focusing on the transition to advanced practice nursing.

Is it more challenging to teach this group knowing students will later pursue a variety of special tracks as part of their master's coursework?

That's not a challenge at all. It's actually part of the rich experience of this group. They come from different backgrounds, learning together for a year and then going on to different specialties in their pursuit of a master's degree.

How would you describe your faculty?

In one word: Enthusiastic! Everyone brings their experience and talents together in a way that is best for our students. Our team consists of very experienced nurses

and educators. Our senior faculty provides wisdom and our junior faculty provides freshness. It all comes together quite nicely.

You have been teaching in this program for 19 years. Tell us about the transformation students make.

I can illustrate that through something I observed this semester that was just brilliant. When our students joined the program in August, they were timid and closed when it came to class discussions. During the fall semester, I noticed they were opening up more. Then, at the beginning of the second semester, Dean Linda Norman joined our class to engage in a simulation game to identify cultural issues nurses need to address. There was so much personality in the room! The students were confident, expressive and articulate. In August, they might have been inhibited, but by second semester, they were not afraid to speak up. They even joked with the Dean! I sat silently in the back of the class with a big smile on my face.

Our program is about unleashing our students' abilities to contribute to the

SUSAN URMY



Left: Faculty Karen Hande and Sarah Fogel enjoy class time with the students. Right: Fogel leads a class discussion during a recent block weekend. The classes are intimate, safe places to learn.

conversation, ask questions, think and wonder why. Everything about the students in our program changes. I see the confidence that grows in clinical settings as well.

How many new students do you have each year?

We range from 20 to 30 students per incoming class. We are not about size, we are about quality, and our students develop close bonds with their classmates.

What makes the Vanderbilt program different?

Through surveys our students tell us how much they value the interaction with their classmates and faculty during their blocks and how much they like that the asynchronous learning allows them to work and live where they want. It's a nice mix of classroom and work at home.

Can you give me a specific example of a student who has flourished throughout the program?

There are many, but the one that quickly comes to my mind is Laura Young. Laura was an associate degree nurse working at a local mental health facility when she joined our program as a part-time student. I got to know Laura during her first year, and we kept in touch as she progressed into our Psychiatric-Mental Health MSN program. She had life changes like having a baby while being a student. She also had a huge desire to learn, and realized that she wanted to earn her Doctor of Nursing Practice. I had

The faculty and I think it is exciting to work with students, each with so much experience in life and in their profession, and help them reframe what they know, and then to apply that knowledge in different ways.



SUSAN URMY

the honor of being her faculty chair through the entire program as she developed a training module for standardizing charge nurse orientation in Tennessee's Mental Health facilities. Now Laura is Nurse Consultant to the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Hospital Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and oversees nursing in all of the state-operated mental health hospitals in Tennessee. Laura's story is impressive, and all of our students have their own stories of transformation.

What do you want everyone to know about this program?

This program is a lot of work on everyone's part—students and faculty. The members of our faculty complement each other so well and each group of students challenges and inspires us. But most of all, it's a wonderful experience that prepares ASNs to be successful in an MSN program and into advanced practice. It's fun.



Virginia Maxwell George, BSN '47B, VUSN professor emerita, celebrated her 90th birthday in February. She was instrumental in the success of the family nurse practitioner program, one of the first of its kind in the Southeast. She retired after 28 years of service and lives in Nashville.

40s

Lucy Goedert Parks, BSN '45, celebrated her 91st birthday in December 2013. She enjoys taking care of her home and yard in Jacksonville, Fla. Her son, David, lives in North Carolina and works for Fidelity Investments.

Iola McClellan Manoogian, BSN '47B, celebrated the arrival of three more great-grandchildren for a total of 30. She spends her time at church functions and visiting friends and family.



Martha Larsen, BSN '48, recently moved to a new room in her retirement community in Columbus, NC. She enjoys bridge and staying in touch with family and friends worldwide. She was chief nurse at the Oak Ridge Tennessee Health Department for five years, and worked more than 27 years in the Biology Division, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, in mammalian genetics (mice) and cryobiology until her retirement in 1984.

60s

Diane Welch Vines, BSN '67, MSN, PhD, is the incoming Dean of Nursing at Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles, home of the state's first Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in 1952. She is also an author, researcher, and an expert on post-traumatic stress disorder and human trafficking.

70s

Diane Ribblett Settlage, BSN '73, and her husband, Steve, BE '73, were delighted to see everyone at their 40th Vanderbilt reunion in 2013. Steve is the president of Tascon Group, Inc. in Richmond, Va.

Rose Ziesch Alvin, MSN '74, PhD, retired after a 45-year nursing career. She stays active by training to become a Pilates instructor, taking American Sign Language courses, and being a proud mom and grandmother. She thinks often about her nursing mentors—Virginia George, Rebecca Culpepper and Libby Dayani. Rose and her husband live in Pittsburgh.

Susan Winchester, BSN '75, is enjoying retirement after moving back to Nashville earlier this year. She recently assisted as a

volunteer for the VUSN Pop-In Study Break and enjoyed talking with the current nursing students.

Christine Benz Smith, PhD, BSN '76, is director of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga School of Nursing. Previously, she served as interim director, associate director and coordinator of the Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration. In April, Smith will be honored by Girls Inc. as a female role model. In 2012, she received the Boys' and Girls' Club of Chattanooga Keystone Award. Smith also serves as vice chair of the Board of Trustees for the Girls' Preparatory School, as a member of the Board of Directors for Hospice of Chattanooga, and as a trustee for the Weldon F. Osborn Foundation.

Cathy Cohill Carter, BSN '77, works for Valor/Humana Healthcare in Bellevue, Wash. She is a retired Commander from the Navy Nurse Corps (2005), and her son, Greg Turner, is an engineering student at Washington State University, who will graduate and commission in the U.S. Navy in December. She enjoys the local garden club activities and quilting.

John Stepulis, MSN '77, and his wife, **Ruth Smalley Stepulis**, MSN '77, are retired and live in Honolulu. John was assistant dean of the School of Nursing at Hawaii Pacific University and remained on staff for several years as an adjunct clinical instructor in the areas of Hospice, HIV/AIDS and Correctional Facility Nursing. Ruth was coordinator of Senior Services at Central Union Church. They are both retired, but remain active in church



Florence Rogers Van Arnam, BSN '52, (pictured second from left) lives in Gainesville, Fla., and at 85, was featured in *Senior Times* for her dancing abilities. She won the People's Choice Award for a local version of *Dancing With The Stars* and inspires other seniors to dance.

activities. The couple will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in May, and welcome classmates or faculty who may be in town.

Thayer Wilson McGahee, BSN '78, PhD, Wells Hanly/Bank of America Endowed Chair in Nursing, is the Interim Dean of the School of Nursing at the University of South Carolina in Aiken. She researches the effects of service learning on



Elizabeth Turrentine, BSN '55, is the mother of four and grandmother of six.

She has worked in the Colorado Rockies, Saudi Arabia and Honolulu and is a world traveler. She sailed through the South Pacific islands between Hawaii and New Zealand for two years and traveled the United States in a recreational vehicle for seven years. Her book, "Climbing Mountains When You're Over the Hill," is available through amazon.com



Vicki Schwartz Beaver, BSN '73, celebrated the marriage of her daughter, Tobey Anne, to Matt Balzer on Oct. 12, 2013. The wedding and reception took place at The Bridge Building, her son's event venue, which was recently voted the best view in Nashville.

nursing students' affective and cognitive development. She is the president of the Pi Lambda chapter of Sigma Theta Tau and is active in her church, her girls' school and the community. She lives in Augusta, Ga., with her husband, Rusty, and three daughters, Mary Frances, Kelly and Rebecca.

80s

Suanne Rogers Barlow, MSN '81, lives in Tampa, Fla. She is retired from the Air Force and stays busy with family, travel



Karen Ann Larimer, MSN '91, BA '86, PhD, ACNP-BC, FAHA, is an assistant professor at

DePaul University's School of Nursing and is incoming board president for the Chicago Board of Directors of the American Heart Association, Midwest Affiliate. Her research interest includes cardiovascular risk reduction in vulnerable/underserved populations.

and activities for her church, Holy Trinity PCA. She is enrolled in Christian Counseling Education Foundation to further her biblical knowledge.

Judith La Gorce Bright, BSN '87, owns handcrafted designer jewelry studios in Nashville and Atlanta. (judithbright.com)

90s

Kimberly Ray, MSN '92, DSN, completed a degree conversion at University of Alabama-Birmingham and now holds a PhD in Nursing. She lives in Burns, Tenn.

Frances Estes Likis, MSN '94, BS '93 (Peabody) DrPH, NP, CNM, FACNM, FAAN, is senior investigator for the Vanderbilt University Evidence-based Practice Center and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*. She is co-editor of the textbook "Women's Gynecologic Health," now in its second edition. This book is used in nursing and midwifery education programs worldwide.

2000s

Margot (Walker) Harris, MSN '00, and her husband, Joshua, welcomed son, John Franklin, on April 17, 2013. He joins Sawyer (10), Eva (8), and Isaac (3). The family lives in Janesville, Wisc. Margot works as a women's health nurse practitioner and lactation consultant in an OB-GYN clinic and a naturopathic clinic.

Patrick Albert Palmieri, MSN '00, DHSc, EdS, MBA, MSc(c), ACNP, RN, CHE CPHRM, CPHQ, FACHE, was selected as the recipient of the 2013 A.T. Still University Distinguished Alumni Award. Through the Sara and



Kimberly Petrovic, MSN '00, has been named visiting assistant professor of nursing at Quinnipiac University. Petrovic, of West Hartford, Conn., has taught nursing at the University of Connecticut and Yale University. Her areas of research, scholarship and teaching include adult development and aging, bioethics, chronic and complex health care conditions, diversity and multiculturalism, genomics, geriatrics and gerontology, global health, health care policy, HIV, human rights, inter-professional collaboration and nursing leadership.

Patrick Palmieri Foundation, Patrick and his wife, Sara, work to provide full, no-interest loans to impoverished girls seeking private university education and to financially support organizations that provide health services to the people of the Amazon. Patrick serves as the treasurer for the American Canadian Association of Peru and a board member for DBPeru.

Cara Caskey Osborn, MSN '01, assistant professor of nursing at the University of Arkansas, received the *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health* Best Research Article Award for "First Birth Cesarean and Risk of Antepartum Fetal Death in a Subsequent Pregnancy." The study was published in the journal's January/February 2012 edition. Osborn also earned doctoral and master's degrees in maternal and child health from Harvard University.

Julie Stuckey, MSN '04, from San Antonio, Texas, is the director of Health Services and nurse practitioner clinician at Our Lady of the Lake University and adjunct faculty in the ADN/BSN program. She is also involved with two underserved rural community clinics, and was a speaker at James Cook University in Townsville, Australia, in October 2013.

Lucy Barker Todd, MSN '04, works for Baxter Healthcare in Asheville, NC, as a medical science liaison in the Renal Division of Medical Products, teaching nephrology fellows about home dialysis therapies, primarily peritoneal dialysis. Todd is engaged in more than 20 fellowship programs throughout the East Coast, with a larger number in the New York City area.

Amy Clark-Cole, MSN '07, is the owner of Cole Family Practice with clinics in Old Hickory and East Nashville. The clinics offer nurse-midwifery care through VUSN nurse-midwives Erin Monberg, Bethany



Whitney Simmons Wormer, MSN '03, and her husband, Brad, welcomed a daughter, Mary Clementine, on Nov. 17, 2013. Whitney is a nurse practitioner at the Veterans Hospital in Nashville.

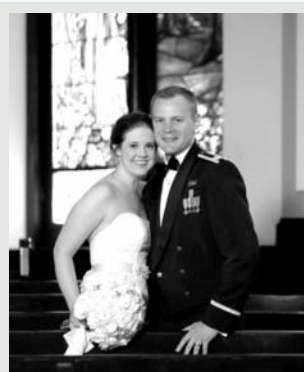


Abigail Watkins-Morgan, MSN '05, and her husband, Greg, welcomed Gregory Rex Morgan III on Sept. 29, 2013. Abigail is practicing at Atlanta Gynecology and Obstetrics.

Sanders and Annie Sorensen. Deliveries are at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Erin Kadege Tolbert, MSN '08, BS '06, is a family nurse practitioner and founder of MidlevelU, an online forum to support nurse practitioners from the beginning of their education throughout the ups and downs of their careers. In her spare time, she enjoys running, biking, being outdoors, frequenting her favorite neighborhood sushi joint and hanging out with her husband and two pups in Nashville.

Tara Sanders, MSN '09, transitioned from her acute care nurse practitioner role at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Surgical Intensive Care Unit to become a full-time assistant pro-



Dabney Lipscomb, BS '05, MSN '07, married Capt. William Wilkerson, U.S. Air Force, on July 20, 2013. The couple lives in Sumter, SC.

fessor of Nursing at Harding University in Searcy, Ark.

Katherine Abraham Evans, DNP '12, had a poster, "Reduction of Antibiotic Starts for Asymptomatic Bacteriuria in Skilled Nursing's Facilities," accepted to the American Medical Directors Association Conference in February. She lives in Atlanta.

Nanette Lavoie-Vaughan, DNP '12, is a clinical assistant professor at East Carolina University College of Nursing's Graduate Program. She will present her DNP project at the American Medical Directors Conference, Aging in America, and American Association of Nurse Practitioners conferences throughout the year. Her project was also featured in Nursing Clinics of North America in March 2014, and will be highlighted in the December issue of *Annals of Long-Term Care*.

April Kapu, MSN '05, DNP '13, RN, APRN, was elected a fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (FAANP). She has worked at Vanderbilt for nine years, most recently serving as the assistant director of Advanced Practice Critical Care at Vanderbilt University Hospital. She was also recently elected as the state representative for the AANP and is on the planning committee for the

2014 AANP Conference in Nashville.

Danbee Kim, MSN '13, RN, FNP-C, secured a family nurse practitioner position with a small family practice (affiliated with a physician-owned hospital) in Northwest Indiana, about an hour from Chicago.

Britney Hagy, BS '06, MSN '08, DNP '13, serves as director of the fellowship program for the Carolinas HealthCare System's newly created Center for Advanced Practice and is based in Charlotte, N.C. Hagy's role is to help recruit, train and enhance the role of advanced-care practitioners

IN MEMORIAM

Martha Stelling Christian, BSN '43 of Fripp Island, S.C., died Oct. 10, 2013.

Bernice Teague McCord, NR '44, of Nashville, Tenn., died at age 102, on Jan. 15.

Mildred Smith Mann, BSN '45, of East Greenville, Pa., died Jan. 13.

Helen Ratliffe Ward, NR '47, Lewisville, Texas, died Sept. 13, 2013.

Helen Westerfield Clapp, BSN '54, of Cumberland, N.C., died July 25, 2013.

Linda Smith Lightfoot, BSN '59, Nicholasville, Ky., died Nov. 27, 2013.

Patricia Kunze Davis, BSN '69, of Dekalb, Ga., died Dec. 19, 2013.

Kathryn Haag Clauss, BSN '71 of Fairfield, Conn., died Oct. 29, 2013.

Gary James Christman, NR'72, of Chapel Hill, Tenn., died Aug. 1, 2013.

Laura Nelson Trent, BSN '77, of Nashville, Tenn., died Jan. 8.

Rita Ann Moffat Krolak, MSN '79, of Dover, Mass., died Aug. 25, 2012

Emma Marsella Smith, MSN '89, of Lafayette, Ind., died Nov. 25, 2013.

SEND ALUMNI NEWS AND PHOTOS TO

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Reunion 2014

Reunion is set for October 9-11, 2014, honoring the Classes of 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009. All alumni are invited to attend Reunion. Visit reunion.vanderbilt.edu/nursing.

For more information, contact Susan Shipley, VUSN director of classes and alumni relations, at (615) 936-3046.

2013 Reunion



1. Twenty-two graduates from the Class of 1963 attended their VUSN 50th Reunion in fall 2013. The group challenges other graduating classes to have a strong showing at each Reunion. Their hint to others: an annual newsletter that has kept them all in touch through the years.

2. Nancy Penrod, BSN '63, wears her nursing pin as a necklace along with other nursing pins belonging to family members.

3. Dean Linda Norman and VUSN honored the fellowship induction of faculty and alumni during the 2013 American Academy of Nursing Conference in October 2013. Pictured (L to R): G. Rumay Alexander, EdD, RN; Frances E. Likis, DrPH, NP, CNM, FACNM; James Pace, DSN, MDiv, ANP, FAANP; Dean Linda Norman; and Todd Monroe, PhD, RN-BC, FNAP. Jane Englebright, PhD, RN, CENP, was an honoree but is not pictured.

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*Original photo of Madison Sarratt from Vanderbilt
University Special Collections and University Archives*

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